Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Semaglutide

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Ozempic; Ozempic (0.25 or 0.5 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (1 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (2 MG/DOSE); Rybelsus; Wegovy; Wegovy HD

Brand Names: Canada

APO-Semaglu(0.25 or 0.5MG/DOS); APO-Semaglutide (1 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (0.25 or 0.5 MG/DOSE); Ozempic (1 MG/DOSE); Rybelsus; Semaglutide (1 MG/DOSE); Semaglutide(0.25 or 0.5MG/DOS); Wegovy; Wegovy FlexTouch

Warning

- This drug has been shown to cause thyroid cancer in some animals. It is not known if this happens in humans. If thyroid cancer happens, it may be deadly if not found and treated early. Call your doctor right away if you have a neck mass, trouble breathing, trouble swallowing, or have hoarseness that will not go away.
- Do not use this drug if you have a health problem called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2), or if you or a family member have had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid cancer (MTC). Talk to your doctor if you are not sure.
- Have your blood work checked and thyroid ultrasounds as you have been told by your doctor.

What is this drug used for?

Ozempic and Rybelsus tablets:

- It is used to help control blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes.
- It is used to lower the chance of heart attack, stroke, and death in people with type 2 diabetes who are at risk for these problems.

Ozempic prefilled pens:

- It is used to help control blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes.
- It is used to lower the chance of heart attack, stroke, and death in people with type 2 diabetes and heart disease.
- It is used to lower the chance of worsening kidney problems and death from heart problems in people with type 2 diabetes and kidney problems.

Wegovy prefilled pens, prefilled syringes, and tablets:

- It is used to help with weight loss in certain people.
- It is used to lower the chance of heart attack, stroke, and death in people who are overweight and have heart disease.

Wegovy prefilled pens and prefilled syringes:

- It is used to treat a certain liver problem called noncirrhotic metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH).

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

All products:

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have ever had pancreatitis.
- If you have a slow-moving bowel tract or other stomach or bowel problems.
- If you are using another drug that has the same drug in it.

- If you are using another drug like this one. If you are not sure, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Products used for high blood sugar (diabetes):

- If you have type 1 diabetes. Do not use this drug to treat type 1 diabetes.

All tablet products:

- If you are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Follow the diet and exercise plan that your doctor told you about.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.
- If you will be having any surgery or procedure, talk with your doctor. This drug may raise the risk of food getting into the lungs during surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sedation. You may need to stop this drug before these types of surgery or procedures.
- Kidney problems have happened. Sometimes, these may need to be treated in the hospital or with dialysis.
- If you cannot drink liquids by mouth or if you have upset stomach, throwing up, or diarrhea that does not go away, you need to avoid getting

dehydrated. Contact your doctor to find out what to do. Dehydration may lead to low blood pressure or to new or worsening kidney problems.

- This drug may prevent other drugs taken by mouth from getting into the body. If you take other drugs by mouth, you may need to take them at some other time than this drug. Talk with your doctor.
- Do not share pen or cartridge devices with another person even if the needle has been changed. Sharing these devices may pass infections from one person to another. This includes infections you may not know you have.
- If you are planning on getting pregnant, talk with your doctor. You may need to stop taking this drug at least 2 months before getting pregnant.

Products used for high blood sugar (diabetes):

- Wear disease medical alert ID (identification).
- Check your blood sugar as you have been told by your doctor.
- Do not drive if your blood sugar has been low. There is a greater chance of you having a crash.
- People taking this drug with other drugs for diabetes may have a raised risk of low blood sugar. Very low blood sugar can lead to seizures, passing out, long lasting brain damage, and sometimes death. Talk with the doctor.
- It may be harder to control blood sugar during times of stress such as fever, infection, injury, or surgery. A change in physical activity, exercise, diet, or weight may also affect blood sugar.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or may be pregnant.

Ozempic prefilled pens:

- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

Wegovy prefilled pens, prefilled syringes, and tablets:

- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your blood sugar closely.
- If you are 75 or older, use this drug with care. You may have a raised chance of hip or pelvis fracture.
- Weight loss during pregnancy may cause harm to the unborn baby. If you get pregnant while taking this drug or if you want to get pregnant, call your doctor right away.

Wegovy prefilled pens and prefilled syringes:

- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

All products:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Signs of gallbladder problems like pain in the upper right belly area, right shoulder area, or between the shoulder blades; change in stools; dark urine or yellow skin or eyes; or fever with chills.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.

- A fast heartbeat.
- Change in eyesight.
- Low blood sugar can happen. The chance may be raised when this drug is used with other drugs for diabetes. Signs may be dizziness, headache, feeling sleepy or weak, shaking, fast heartbeat, confusion, hunger, or sweating. Call your doctor right away if you have any of these signs. Follow what you have been told to do for low blood sugar. This may include taking glucose tablets, liquid glucose, or some fruit juices.
- Severe and sometimes deadly pancreas problems (pancreatitis) have happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have severe stomach pain, severe back pain, or severe upset stomach or throwing up.

Wegovy prefilled pens, prefilled syringes, and tablets:

- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Pain in the hip or pelvis.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

Products used for high blood sugar (diabetes):

- Constipation, diarrhea, throwing up, and upset stomach are common with this drug. If these happen, talk with your doctor about ways to lower these side effects. Call your doctor right away if any of these effects bother you, do not go away, or are severe.
- Stomach pain.

All tablet products:

- Decreased appetite.

Wegovy prefilled pens, prefilled syringes, and tablets:

- Constipation, diarrhea, throwing up, and upset stomach are common with this drug. If these happen, talk with your doctor about ways to lower these side effects. Call your doctor right away if any of these effects bother you, do not go away, or are severe.
- Stomach pain.
- Headache.
- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Runny nose.
- Bloating.
- Burping.
- Gas.
- Heartburn.
- Hair loss.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All tablet products:

- Take at least 30 minutes before the first food, drink, or drugs of the day.
- Take with plain water only. Do not take with more than 4 ounces (120 mL) of water.
- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, crush, or dissolve.
- Do not take more than 1 tablet each day.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

Prefilled syringes or pens:

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin on the top of the thigh, belly area, or upper arm.
- If you will be giving yourself the shot, your doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- Take with or without food.
- Take the same day each week.
- Move the site where you give the shot with each shot.
- Do not give into skin within 2 inches (5 cm) of the belly button.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- This drug is clear and colorless. Do not use if the solution changes color.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Remove all pen needle covers before injecting a dose (there may be 2). If you are not sure what type of pen needle you have or how to use it, talk with the doctor.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Throw away needles in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not reuse needles or other items. When the box is full, follow all local rules for getting rid of it. Talk with a doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Products used for high blood sugar (diabetes):

- Attach new needle before each dose.
- Take off the needle after each shot and safely put it in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not store this device with the needle on it.
- Put the cap back on after you are done using your dose.
- If you are also using insulin, you may inject this drug and the insulin in the same area of the body but not right next to each other.
- Do not mix this drug in the same syringe with insulin.
- This product may make a clicking sound as you prepare the dose. Do not prepare the dose by counting the clicks. Doing so could lead to using the wrong dose.

Wegovy single-dose prefilled pens and prefilled syringes:

- Each container is for one use only. Use right after opening. Throw away any part of the opened container after the dose is given.
- Do not use this drug if it has been dropped or if it is broken.

Wegovy multi-dose prefilled pens:

- This pen is not for self-injection by people who cannot see well. If you cannot see well, someone else may need to give you this injection. Talk with your doctor.
- Attach new needle before each dose.
- Do not use this drug if it has been dropped or if it is broken.
- Do not wash or soak the pen. It may be cleaned with mild soap on a damp cloth.
- This pen has 4 doses in it. Throw away any drug left in the pen after 4 doses have been used.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

All tablet products:

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

Prefilled syringes or pens:

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it and go back to your normal time.
- If it is less than 48 hours until your next dose, skip the missed and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses within 48 hours of each other.
- If you miss 2 doses, call your doctor.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

All tablet products:

- Store in the original container at room temperature.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Prefilled syringes or pens:

- Store unopened pens in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.
- Do not store right next to the cooling element in the refrigerator.
- Do not use if it has been frozen.

Ozempic prefilled pens:

- After opening, store in the refrigerator or at room temperature. Throw away any part not used after 56 days.
- Protect from heat and light.

Wegovy single-dose prefilled pens and prefilled syringes:

- You may store unopened containers at room temperature. If you store at room temperature, throw away any part not used after 28 days.
- Store in the outer carton to protect from light.
- Protect from heat.
- Throw away drug if stored at a temperature above 86°F (30°C).

Wegovy multi-dose prefilled pens:

- After opening, store in the refrigerator or at room temperature. Throw away any part not used after 56 days.
- Protect from heat and light.
- Throw away drug if stored at a temperature above 86°F (30°C).
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Take off the needle after each shot and safely put it in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not store this device with the needle on it.
- Store with the pen cap on.

All products:

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- This drug comes with an extra patient fact sheet called a Medication Guide. Read it with care. Read it again each time this drug is refilled. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with the doctor, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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